

# media release

*Colorado Department of Agriculture*

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## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### ***Producers Urged to Vote in Sunflower Assessment Referendum***

LAKEWOOD, Colo. – Colorado sunflower producers are invited to vote on an amendment to the Sunflower Marketing Order. Currently, the sunflower assessment is set at 3 cents per hundredweight; the proposed new rate will increase the assessment to up to 6 cents per hundredweight and would be set annually by the Colorado Sunflower Administrative Committee.

“If you are a sunflower producer, please express your opinion by voting on this important referendum,” said Colorado Agriculture Commissioner, John Salazar. “This is your marketing order and the decision on an assessment increase is a big decision and should be made by those who will be most affected—Colorado’s sunflower producers.”

The goal of a marketing order is to establish and expand the market as well as create and maintain that product as a viable crop in Colorado. The current assessment rate has been in effect since the Sunflower Administrative Committee was established in 2001. If passed, the increase is set to be invested in sunflower research projects that will discover yield improvement strategies such as disease and insect management, improved hybrid testing strategies, and quality improvement to both oil and confection type sunflower.

Ballots will be mailed to producers on June 1 and must be postmarked to the Colorado Department of Agriculture no later than June 22. The proposed amendment must be approved by a simple majority of sunflower producers voting on the referendum to become effective.

Should any producer believe they are eligible to vote but doesn't receive a ballot, one can be requested by contacting the Department. For purposes of the Colorado Sunflower Marketing Order, a producer is defined as "any person who is engaged in the business of producing or causing to be produced at least twenty (20) acres for market sunflower grown in the State of Colorado."

For questions or to request a ballot, please contact Tom Lipetzky at the Colorado Department of Agriculture at (303) 239-4100 or by e-mail to [tom.lipetzky@ag.state.co.us](mailto:tom.lipetzky@ag.state.co.us).

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